

## Memories of Youse Add to ACM Exhibit

Friends, former students and fellow artists of the late Gay Youse gathered at the Art Complex Museum on Sunday, surrounded by the late Duxbury artist's paintings and watercolors, which are on exhibit through April 5. A panel of 6 and an audience of about 75 shared memories and stories that formed as vivid an image as any on the walls around them.



Through their commentary, the art became a manifestation of an artist who saw her work as a deeply spiritual calling.

For years, Youse taught classes for children and adults at the Duxbury Art Assn and later in her studio. Among the ranks of her former students are many artists and art teachers, including Virginia Freyermuth, the head of the Duxbury schools art department.

Freyermuth began studying with Youse as a 13-year-old; speaking as a panelist she recalled landing her own 1st teaching job, and sharing the news with Youse, whom she credits as the inspiration for her career.

"Shake in your boots before you open your mouth," the experienced teacher advised the novice. "One of your students could remember what you say for the rest of their life." Freyermuth has shared this story during her travels around the country as something of an educational ambassador. Having previously been selected as Massachusetts teacher of the year and the nation's outstanding art educator, Freyermuth has spread Youse's convictions far beyond Duxbury.

A spiritual connection to creativity was apparent in the story of how Youse, broken hearted as a young woman whose fiance had been tragically killed, immersed herself in art and made it her love. "God has made the world far too beautiful to go through life with your eyes closed," she had said to several of the panelists.

**Duxbury Clipper, Wednesday, March 4, 1998**

Serving as the first director of the Bumpus Gallery, housed in the Duxbury Library, Youse made it her mission to make sure the very best art was available for viewing by those who lived in her town, even if her choices were at times controversial. She also felt keenly the difficulties of establishing a career as an artist, and was committed to exhibiting work by promising but emerging artists.

Sara Weeks Peabody is an artist and long-time friend who shared Youse's love of the Maine coast. She compared some of the earlier works in the exhibition, which Youse worked on over the course of 4 years, with later paintings that were completed in under an hour.

"I was working from a spot a little above where Gay was when she did that," recalled Peabody, referring to one of Youse's paintings of Western island, off the coast of Maine. "After about 40 minutes, she said 'I can't think of anything else to do to it.'" Indeed, most agreed that this mature work was one of her best.

Among other panelists were Boston artist Iso Papo, who knew Youse since the 1950s, when she worked at an art supply store on Dartmouth St.; and Doctor Arthur Wills, a Boston physician and collector who practices and displays work in his collection in his downtown office. He remembered meeting Youse at a political meeting held in a Duxbury church. Although he knew little about art at the beginning of their friendship, he began hosting parties following openings at the Bumpus Gallery, and couldn't resist collecting work by the artists he met. "Soon, I had to make medicine my hobby and collecting my profession," he recalled.

Reluctant to sell her work, convinced that she couldn't possibly create anything as perfect as the Creator who had made the beauty that was her inspiration, Youse would agree at times to "give" her painting and drawings to people who insisted on helping out with payment on an oil delivery or even a dentist bill. And so it was that a community nurtured an artist, and made it possible for her to follow her calling.

Youse's friends recalled how Youse often walked against the wind and rain, sand blowing in her face as she gazed at the power of the crashing waves. "Gay wanted direct contact with the creation," said Constance Parvey, a close friend and pastor who preached the eulogy at Youse's funeral. "She liked to walk the beach

in a Nor'easter."

Youse's own life was equally stormy. "Gay did not have an easy life. She faced physical and psychological pain in an era before support groups. We didn't know as much then about how to help each other," Parvey remembered.

Although she faced her own storms, and embraced the storms in nature, a transcendent tranquility is evident in her paintings.

A DHS scholarship established in her name was particularly meaningful to Youse, who understood firsthand being an artist in spite of hardship. She presented the award to its 1st recipient after she began chemotherapy treatments for the cancer that eventually claimed her life.

No day of remembering Youse would have been complete without remembering her love of the Maine coast. More than half the paintings in the ACM exhibition are of this area which has appealed to so many artists and it was there, with her easel, that Youse was most content.

Evelyn Day, a close Duxbury friend who rented her family cottage in Corca, ME, to Youse for many seasons, recalled the artist's last birthday in 1994. Youse stood at her easel in front of Day's cottage, facing her favorite view of Western Island.

"Are you having a nice birthday?" Day asked Youse.

"I can't think of anything else I would want to do on my birthday," she responded. "God has been good to me."



The late Gay Youse painting in Corea, ME.

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## A Tribute to Gay Youse

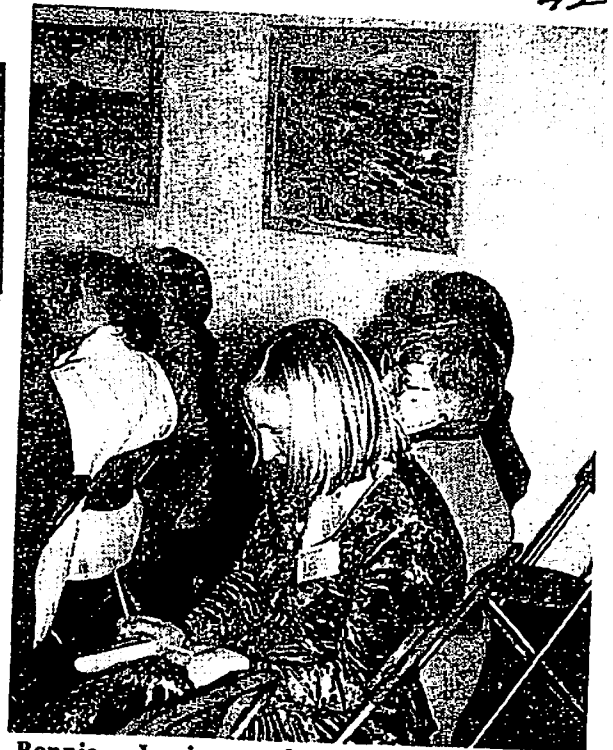


Elizabeth Gray tells a story about artist Gay Youse during a discussion that was a part of the gallery reception in honor of the legacy of the late artist and Helen Bumpus Gallery director.

*Photos by Fran Nichols*



Exhibitions Curator of the Art Complex Museum, Lisa Greenbery leads the panel discussion on the life and legacy of the late artist and teacher, Gay Youse.



Bonnie Jernigan of the Art Complex Museum takes notes during the panel discussion on the legacy of artist Gay Youse. Gay's oil paintings, done in Corea, Maine at the summer home of Evelyn Day, are shown on the wall above the audience.



L-r: Cliff Youse, nephew of artist Gay Youse, artist and former Duxbury resident Nat Simpkins and Virginia Freyermuth, art coordinator for the Duxbury Schools pause for a photo during the reception in honor of Gay Youse at the Art Complex Museum.



L-r: Constance Parvey and Dr. Arthur Wills with Cliff Youse, nephew of artist Gay Youse at the reception. The "Tribute to Gay Youse" exhibition continues Wednesday-Sunday, 1 to 4 pm through April 5.



On Sunday, March 1 a gallery reception was held at the Art Complex Museum in honor of the legacy of artist, and former Helen Bumpus Gallery Director Gay Youse. A panel discussion took place which included many of Gay's close friends and associates. L-r: Constance Parvey, Dr. Arthur Wills, Evelyn Day, Virginia Freyermuth, Iso Papo, Sara Peabody and (back to camera) Lisa Greenberg.



Virginia Freyermuth (l), the K-12 arts coordinator for the Duxbury Schools and Sara Peabody listen to well-known artist Iso Papo as he speaks about his recollections of Gay Youse during the panel discussion at the Art Complex Museum.



Ruth Rowley (l) and Elsie Chadwick chats during the reception in honor of the exhibition at the Art complex Museum, "Tribute to Gay Youse."



Benjamin Goodrich enjoys the refreshments during the reception in honor of Gay Youse.